



## **How to Request a Letter of Recommendation for CAPA Global Internship Program Tips**

CAPA requires applicants to provide two letters of recommendation to accompany your internship application:

- 1) **Academic Reference:** Professor or School Administrator
- 2) **Professional Reference:** Current or previous employer

If you have not been previously employed, you can obtain a letter of recommendation from a volunteer supervisor or a supervisor from an extracurricular activity.

### **Academic Recommendation:**

- Should include comments on your class performance, your intellectual abilities, and your potential to be a successful intern
- Try to ask a professor with whom you have successfully worked with recently and who knows your capabilities, the more relevant the course is to your preferred internship areas the better
- Try to ask a professor with whom you have had a number of interactions with, whether through classes, advising or general support.
- If you are applying for an internship where a foreign language will be required, have a professor write a letter attesting to your language level and your potential to use the language in a professional setting

### **Professional Recommendation:**

- Should come from someone who can speak to your professional capabilities
- Try to choose someone who has known you for a while, and is familiar with your abilities, skills and aspects of your personality, that will contribute to your prospective international internship placement
- Please avoid using family contacts, unless you have worked with them in a professional capacity.

### **Making the Request:**

- Make your request well in advance—at least three or four weeks before the deadline
- Meet in person, if possible by setting up a meeting, which makes it more personal and allows time for questions that will help when writing the recommendation. Seeing you in person will make it easier for your professor to recall previous interactions with you.

- When requesting a letter of recommendation tell this person about the internship program, why you are applying and what you hope to learn.

### **Helpful Ways to Phrase the Request:**

- “Do you feel that you know me well enough to write a recommendation for me?”
- “Do you think I would be a good candidate for this program and, if so, would you be willing to write a recommendation?”
- “I’m applying for an international internship placement and believe they will be interested in (ex: my performance in your class, the research I’ve been doing). Would you be willing to write a recommendation for me?”

### **Follow-up Actions:**

- When someone has agreed to help you, make the job easier by offering to e-mail him or her information about the international internship program and why you are applying. You might provide a brief description of the program and a paper or exam you wrote for the instructor’s course (preferably the copy that was returned to you with comments), or a brief one-page resume.
- As the deadline approaches, send the person writing your recommendation a courteous reminder. Afterward, send a brief thank-you note. Keep this person informed as the application proceeds.
- Once someone has written a recommendation letter for you, s/he will generally be willing to adapt and update the letter for other purposes in the future. It is always a good idea to keep a copy of this letter in a safe place for future use.
- If your request is declined; perhaps s/he doesn’t know you well enough; your academic performance in his/her class was not strong enough, or you haven’t allowed adequate time. Don’t worry this is not the end of world; it just means you need to ask someone else. In some cases, someone who declines to write a recommendation may be willing to offer suggestions for identifying others who would be more appropriate for you.
- If your recommender needs more guidance on what to include in their reference letter, please reach out to your CAPA Program Manager who will be able to guide them.
- It is always wise to collect letters of recommendation from supervisors of any professional or volunteer positions you hold. After you complete your international internship, this will be a new opportunity for you to ask your supervisor for a letter of recommendation that can be used to enhance your candidacy for future application.